

REMARKS

The examiner is thanked for the performance of a thorough search. No claims have been amended, cancelled, or added. Hence, Claims 1-17 are pending in the application.

Each issue raised in the Office Action mailed June 24, 2005 is addressed hereinafter.

I. ISSUES RELATING TO PRIOR ART

Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over James et al (US Patent No. 6,904,600; hereinafter *James*), in view of Preisig et al. (US Patent No. 6,882,996; hereinafter *Preisig*), and further in view of W3C’s “Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) 1.1” (hereinafter W3C). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

A. CLAIM 1

Claim 1 recites:

A method for masking version differences among a plurality of applications providing similar services over a network, the method comprising the steps of:
receiving, at an application switching component from a requesting process, a request for a service among the similar services, wherein the request includes data indicating a particular service extension is mandatory;
sending the request to a first application of the plurality of applications;
receiving, at the application switching component in response to sending the request to the first application, error data that indicates the particular service extension is not available at the first application; and
in response to receiving the error data, sending the request from the application switching component to a second application of the plurality of applications, wherein the second application is different from the first application.

The Office Action asserts that *James* discloses a method comprising the first three steps, namely 1) receiving, at an application switching component from a requesting process, a request for a service among the similar services, 2) sending the request to a first application of a plurality of applications, and 3) receiving, at the application switching component in response to sending

the request to the first application, error data that indicates the particular service extension is not available. This is incorrect.

The figures and paragraphs in *James* referred to by the Office Action disclose nothing about an application switching component nor anything that could relate to one. Claim 1 provides that an application switching component receives a request, from a requesting process for a service and then the request is sent to a first application. The cited paragraphs in *James* simply state that a client-side application creates and sends a request to a server application (col. 4 lines 16-18, 37-38). By way of analogy and without limiting the scope of the claim, even if the client-side application of *James* could be the requesting process of Claim 1 and the server application of *James* could be the first application of Claim 1, *James* is missing the application switching component of Claim 1 which receives the request and, in one embodiment, sends the request to a first application of a plurality of applications. Thus, because *James* neither teaches nor suggests an application switching component, nor any type of component other than a remote server, between the client-side application and the server application, *James* fails to disclose at least the first three steps of Claim 1.

Furthermore, the Office Action admits that the combination of W3C and *James* does not disclose a plurality of applications and, in response to receiving the error data, sending the request from the application switching component to a second application of the plurality of applications. The Office Action then asserts,

Preisig teaches a plurality of applications (HTTP GET or HTTP POST; XML or URL encoded, DADX or DTD resource file, and the associated action) and, in response to the decision (36, 38, 40, 60, 64, 68), sending the request from the application switching component to a second application of the plurality of applications, wherein the second application is different from the first application.

This is incorrect.

Applications are programs that perform a function directly for a user. Simply, applications process data and perform at least one of receiving or sending data. The “applications” that the Office Action claims are taught by *Preisig* are in fact messages and files, not applications. These messages and files in *Preisig* do not even process data, much less send or receive data. Thus, it would be impossible for the HHTP GET or HTTP POST in *Preisig* to be “a plurality of applications” as taught by Claim 1.

Additionally, *Preisig* neither teaches nor suggests sending the request from the application switching component to a second application in response to receiving error data. In fact, the decision tree of *Preisig* referred to in the Office Action illustrates that once an error message is received, an error response is returned to the service requester and the process ends (col. 4 lines 42-45). Thus, it would be impossible for *Preisig* to teach that a request is sent from an application switching component to a second application after receiving error data.

Because neither *James* nor W3C disclose an application switching component and *Preisig* fails to disclose a plurality of applications and performing an operation in response to receiving error data, combining the teachings of *James*, W3C, and *Preisig* necessarily cannot provide all the elements of Claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1 is patentable over *James*, W3C, and *Preisig*.

B. CLAIMS 2-17

Claims 2-17 are dependent claims, each of which depends (directly or indirectly) on Claim 1 discussed above. Each of Claims 2-17 is therefore allowable for the reasons given above for the claim on which it depends. In addition, each of Claims 2-17 introduces one or more additional limitations that independently render it patentable. However, due to the fundamental differences already identified, to expedite the positive resolution of this case a separate discussion of those limitations is not included at this time, although the Applicants

reserve the right to further point out the differences between the cited art and the novel features recited in the dependent claims.

II. CONCLUSIONS & MISCELLANEOUS

For the reasons set forth above, all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone relating to any issue that would advance examination of the present application.

A petition for extension of time, to the extent necessary to make this reply timely filed, is hereby made. If applicable, a law firm check for the petition for extension of time fee is enclosed herewith. If any applicable fee is missing or insufficient, throughout the pendency of this application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to any applicable fees and to credit any overpayments to our Deposit Account No. 50-1302.

Respectfully submitted,

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